(c) the reasons for restarting the entire process again;

(d) whether any advisor has been appointed for this purpose; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY): (a) to (c) In April, 2003 Government decided that the cap on foreign participation for acquisition of the 51 per cent equity of Shipping Corporation of India Ltd. (SCI) be removed and fresh Expressions of Interest (Eols) be invited allowing foreign participation in line with the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) policy for the shipping sector. Accordingly, fresh Expressions of Interest were invited through advertisement issued on 7th May, 2003.

(d) and (e) The Government decided that the consortium of M/s. Lazard India Ltd. and SBI Capital Market Ltd. be retained as Advisors.

CAG objections on Recruitment in Foreign Missions

1251. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has pointed out that the Heads of Foreign Missions abroad are flouting the rules relating to the recruitment of Group 'D' personnel in their establishments despite repeated objections by the CAG;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure that these rules are strictly adhered to be the foreign missions abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) CAG in its report No. 2 of 2003 has pointed out unauthorized expenditure on the engagement of contingent staff in Embassy of India, Athens, Belgrade, Brussels, Paris, Moscow, Rome and Consulate General of India, Birmingham.

(b) The Missions/Posts have been cautioned to adhere to the Govt. of India's instructions to exercise due care in the matter of employing contingency paid staff. Ministry has also undertaken an exercise to rationalize the staff structure of the Missions/Posts abroad.